

Greetings!

Welcome to the April, 2015 edition of ***The Northern Connection***, quarterly e-news from the Northern Region Office, Wisconsin Department of Administration. The format is short bits of information, with links to details for those who want to learn more. Please feel free to share specific information, or this entire e-news, with your colleagues & those you serve.

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## ***The Northern Connection***

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### **Need Maps?**

Follow this link to order single or multiple copies of free, foldable state highway maps from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation: <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/business/publications/roadmap.htm>  
A variety of wall maps are also available for a fee.

### **Planning a Summer Event?**

Festivals, fairs, parades and other special events bring communities together and help raise money for organizations across the state. These events also generate trash – lots of it! Starting or stepping up a recycling program at your event can save money, enhance the reputation of your event and reduce its environmental impact. Pick up some tips from the Department of Natural Resources at [this link](#).

### **Chambers of Commerce & Economic Development Corporations – Help Spread the Word!**

Please consider sharing the following three items with your members.

### **International Experts to Provide Exporting Advice to Businesses**

Businesses considering starting or expanding their exporting efforts are invited to meet one-on-one with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation's international trade experts at the Chippewa Valley Technical College in Menomonie on **Tuesday, May 5**. Representatives from seven foreign trade offices of WEDC, representing a total of nine markets, will provide business with valuable information about market conditions and potential connections overseas.

The exporting information session, hosted by Momentum West, kicks off with a presentation from 1:30 to 3 p.m., following by one-on-one consultations from 3 to 5 p.m. For more information or to register, visit <http://business.momentumwest.org/events/details/trade-representative-forum-13>

### **Help for Small Business from the Department of Natural Resources**

In Wisconsin, small businesses play a particularly important role in the economy, accounting for more than 97 percent of all employers and providing jobs for slightly more than half of the private sector labor force. As part of the DNR's continued commitment to support small businesses in Wisconsin, the agency has expanded its **Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP)**, which serves as a resource and partner for small businesses throughout the state. The SBEAP mission: "We are a non-regulatory program aimed at getting small businesses the information and contacts they need for all their environmental questions so they can do the right thing for the environment and their business."

Details can be found at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/smallbusiness/> Talk to a real, live person on weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. by calling 855-889-3021, or email [DNRSmallBusiness@wi.gov](mailto:DNRSmallBusiness@wi.gov)

### **WWBIC at Work in the North**

Exciting things are happening at [Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation](#), (WWBIC) a statewide economic development corporation serving both women and men entrepreneurs throughout the state! WWBIC continues to expand services to business owners in Northern Wisconsin via Beth Kost, its Rural Small Business Consultant based in Rhinelander. In addition to offering classes, one-on-one assistance, and direct lending programs, WWBIC is now a trustee for [KIVA Zip](#), a crowdfunding website that enables financially excluded entrepreneurs to access 0% interest micro business loans.

### **April 15<sup>th</sup> is Tax Day --- So where's my Wisconsin refund?**

Taxpayers can check on their Wisconsin refund 24 hours a day, seven days a week by visiting the Wisconsin Department of Revenue [website](#), utilizing the WI Revenue mobile app (available in the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#)), or calling the automated refund line: 866-WIS-RFND (866-947-7363) or (608) 266-8100.

### **Broadband News**

#### **PSC Launches New Broadband Site**

The Public Service Commission (PSC) has launched a new website on Broadband in Wisconsin called [LinkWISCONSIN](#). The front page of the website states “*The mission of the State Broadband Office's LinkWISCONSIN Initiative is to make Wisconsin more competitive through advancing the availability, adoption, and use of broadband technologies.*” As part of the PSC of Wisconsin, the State Broadband Office works with stakeholders to build partnerships with providers and consumers to enhance broadband across the state. The State Broadband Office also administers broadband improvement funding through its annual Broadband Expansion Grant Program.

#### **Looking for Funding for your Broadband project?**

The Broadband & E-commerce Education Center, UW-Extension, can point you in the right direction! The Center is pleased to announce its latest publication, a highly anticipated document collecting [local, state and federal funding sources \(including the Governor's recent announcement of increased broadband funding\)](#) to connect Wisconsin communities with broadband access and education.

Partners around the state report that economic development interest in broadband is increasing, as well as demand for investment in this technology. Linking communities with funding resources builds on the Broadband & E-commerce Education Center role of “Connecting Communities to Compete.” Learn more about the Center's work at: <http://broadband.uwex.edu/>

### **Great News for Walleye Fishermen & Fisherwomen in the North!**

The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board has approved an emergency rule that **maintains a three walleye daily bag limit** on most lakes and rivers in the Wisconsin Ceded Territory. While the previous bag limits varied from lake to lake, the three walleye bag limit covers waters throughout Wisconsin's Cede Territory, providing greater consistency through a standard set of fishing regulations. Check out all the details at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/news/releases/article/?id=3560>

### **Attention Northern Wisconsin Landowners**

A great variety of Wisconsin's wildlife species rely on young forests. Actively managing your land can make it more attractive to birds and animals that will use it and make it their home. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is offering free habitat evaluations to landowners considering managing their land to benefit wildlife. Management techniques are simple, and financial assistance is available to landowners. Interested? Check out the **Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership** at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/youngforest.html>

### **New Magazine Showcases Agriculture as an Engine of Economic Growth**

For the state of Wisconsin, agriculture is much more than simply growing food. More than 12% of Wisconsin's workforce makes a living off of agriculture and agribusiness. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), together with statewide partners, is distributing “*Growing Wisconsin: Connecting consumers to farms, food and forestry.*” View the publication on-line at [www.WIagriculture.com](http://www.WIagriculture.com) For multiple copies to distribute at your FFA Banquet or Dairy Breakfast, email Jim Dick, DATCAP Communications Director at [jim.dick@wi.gov](mailto:jim.dick@wi.gov)

### **YOUTH -- You CAN Work! A promising future starts today! Check out WISCONSIN PROMISE**

Wisconsin Promise is looking for youth 14, 15, or 16 years old who receive SSI or Supplemental Security Income. Wisconsin Promise helps youth and their families improve their income and savings. Individual Development Accounts are available to Promise Participants. A better future starts today. Find out more about Wisconsin Promise at: <https://promisewi.com/>

### **BLS Report: Wisconsin's Annual Average Veteran Unemployment Posts 5th Largest Decline in the Nation in 2014**

The 2014 unemployment rate in Wisconsin for military veterans plummeted by 3.5 percent – the fifth highest drop in the nation – to 4.1 percent and is tied for the 12th lowest rate in the country, according to data published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Find out more by visiting the Department of Workforce Development [news page](#).

### **Women Veterans Workshop: Reaching out to all women who served**

On **May 15th** the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) Women Veterans Program will be hosting a **Women Veterans Workshop** at Trinity Equestrian in Eau Claire. This daylong event will be a great opportunity for women veterans, their family and friends to meet one another. The day will be filled with learning about the kinds of alternative therapy available to veterans such as art and yoga. In this relaxed environment veterans can learn about the tools available to make them a stronger person from the inside out as well as connect with fellow veterans. In the afternoon, the day will be capped off with a demonstration of the equine therapy Trinity offers veterans suffering from PTSD. For more information and to register for this event go to [www.WisVets.com](http://www.WisVets.com)

### **Northern Region Office 101**

The role of the Office is to be a connection point between communities in Northern Wisconsin and the resources of state government. If you are looking for information, have a suggestion or need assistance with problem resolution with a state agency, please contact me at [MaryAnnT.Lippert@wisconsin.gov](mailto:MaryAnnT.Lippert@wisconsin.gov) I travel throughout the 40 county region north of U.S. Highway 10 and can be available, with 3 to 4 weeks notice, to attend your meetings and events. Keep in touch!